A Tayal never went out alone in quest of a head; he was always accompanied. The little group did not start until it had consulted the omens; if one of the members of the expedition had had a bad dream, or if the augural bird, the silliok, had sung in the wrong way, the warriors did not leave the village. And even if all the signs were favorable, they did not venture very far. They built a little hut at the entrance to the forest, and arranged their weapons and food stuffs there. Then they purified their arms and provisions by sprinkling them with fresh water. When this was done, the head of the expedition purified himself, and then all of his companions in the same way. Then everyone went to bed. The next morning they examined the dreams and portents again, especially the bird songs. The hunt did not begin unless all of the signs were propitious. As you see, the change from ordinary life to the hunt was made progressively and in a prudent fashion. It was a matter of getting the support of the ancestors' spirits. In the village all taboos were enforced while the hunters were absent. The women did not weave, all useless activities were avoided, and the fires which were lighted in each house before the departures of the warriors were kept burning. The men walked until they found a good spot to lay a trap. The capture of a head was not an heroic combat, for the unfortunate victim was taken by surprise. One warrior shot, while the others rushed ahead to finish him off with lance thrusts. When the victim was prostrate, the warrior for whom the hunt had been arranged [38] drew his sabre and cut off the head of the dying

man at the base of the skull. The head was taken back in a special kind of net, or else it was fastened to a hook that was inserted into the scalp.

22: Wiedfeldt--25-26 F-6 (1913) 1914 Formosan Aborigines
116, 726 Atayal

The members of the clan go into battle together. If one of them falls, the clan is defeated, and the others go back home with the consciousness of having performed their duty. [26] The Japanese take advantage of this custom in fighting with the Atayals. They attempt to kill one member of as many clans as possible.

40: Kirk-- 12-13 S-2 (no date) 1941 Formosan Aborogines
116, 726, 177.72 Japanese

"The repeated campaigns to subdue the savages by force of arms in the years following 1895 met with slight success. The Japanese soldiers knew so little about the geography of the country and were so poorly equipped to deal with the guerilla warfare of the savages that they not only were defeated again and again but were often forced to beat a disorderly retreat and leave their weapons behind to fall into the hands of the enemy. The Japanese had to [13] grope through creeping vines and underbrush because they did not know the trails, while the savages could run like deer and climb like monkeys.

The Japanese gradually learned through costly experience how to stretch out and defend the guard line successfully."